

THE CONCEPTION OF THE TWO *DRṢṬI*-S
IN ŚAṆKARA'S *BRHADĀRANYAKOPANIṢADBHĀṢYA* I, 4, 10

Τὸ μὴ δυνόν ποτε πῶς ἂν τις λάθοι;

Heraclitus of Ephesus, *apud* CLEMENS of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, II, 99, 5.

The passage in Śaṅkara's commentary on *BĀU* I, 4, 10¹ dealing with the distinction between *nityā* and *anityā drṣṭi*-s gives us a poignant analysis of the difficulties as well as of the implications to be discovered in the process of individuating *ātman* through his role as *sākṣin* in actual experience.

Such a distinction, which is outlined following the thread of thought developed in the same *upaniṣad* under the venerable name of Yājñiavalkya², is not always present to the mind of expositors and critics of *Kevalādvaitavāda*. They consequently quite often happen to misunderstand the very core of the *sākṣin*'s doctrine³. The following brief considerations endeavour to bring into attention the set of ideas contained in the aforementioned discussion on the part of the great *Ācārya*, amongst the richer and most interesting items found in his whole masterpiece.

1. The abbreviation «*BĀU*» stands henceforth for «*Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*».

2. See *BĀU* II, 4, 14; III, 4, 2; III, 7, 23; IV, 3, 23 ff.

3. Cfr. for instance: O. LACOMBE, *L'Absolu selon le Védānta. Les notions de Brahman et d'Ātman dans les systèmes de Ṣaṅkara ed Rāmānoudja*, Paris², 1966, pp. 231 ff., who writes of a «*jugement réflexe*» being the form of actualization of the «*conscience de Soi*» and theorizes some sort of experience of *ātman* in which «*le sujet personnel qui se sert des organes et des normes se saisit immédiatement lui-même sans leur secours*»; N. K. DEVARAJA, *An Introduction to Śaṅkara's Theory of Knowledge*, Delhi-Varanasi-Patna, 1962, pp. 180 f., where he constructs *ātman*'s undeniability as pertaining to «*empirical self*», accusing Śaṅkara of confounding it with «*pure cit*» in his «*enthusiasm to vindicate the self-established character of the self*»; D. SINHA, *The Idealist Standpoint. A Study in the Vedantic Metaphysics of Experience*, Calcutta, 1965, pp. 140 ff., who asserts that «*Cit-essence*» is «*obtained from within the region of "purified" subjective experience in the wake of transcendental reflection*» and it is «*marked by knowability*» (italics by the author) at its terminal stage; K. SATCHIDANANDA MURTY, *Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta*, Delhi-Varanasi-Patna², 1974, p. 255, who speaks of an «*intuition of the One without the manifold*» in which the self «*perceives itself as the One*».

I.i. Introduction of the Role as Sākṣin as a Means of Individuation of Ātman.

The argument given in *BĀU* III, 4, 2 for the unknowability of *ātman* is not felt by Śaṅkara simply to answer such a purpose. In his mind, it implies, side by side with its admitted function in the complex texture of the *upaniṣad*⁴, a clear definition of the very notion of *ātman* as related to the field of actual experience. Such a definition appears to be needful, in so far as we otherwise would lack any concrete presentation of ultimate Reality, since it transcends in itself each and every objectual content of our awareness⁵. In the case that the upholder of *aupaniṣada* soteriology were unable to point out his *svābhāvikātman* in terms of what we directly undergo⁶, as requested on the part of both adversaries and pupils, his views would prove to be stranger to that very consciousness which they purport to discover in the ever-abiding light of *Brahman*⁷.

In the *Bhāṣyakāra*'s discussion, the full definition is reached step by step. A *prima facie* formulation desumed from *BĀU* III, 4, 2 is firstly presented, in order to show the difficulties arising from the attempt to enucleate the subject inside the field of our several cognitive processes in everyday life. Only in face of the failure to cope with such difficulties is the final formulation, as found in the text of the *upaniṣad*, brought out. The peculiar genitives of internal object that characterize the text under discussion are, in this way, introduced as following by logical necessity from the inefficiency of a plain linguistic expression of *ātman*'s role as *sākṣin*. Far from being acknowledged as some idiosyncrasy of the *Śruti*'s dicta, they are seen as an indispensable device to convey a portrayal of a Reality in itself metalinguistic.

The *prima facie* formulation as expressed in the sketchy statement « *draṣṭā śrotā mantā vijñātā sa ātmeti* » lends itself to different readings. On one hand, it closely follows the structure of Yājñavalkya's own exposition, with the obvious view of preparing the ground for the proof of the soundness thereof; on the other hand, the first two *nomina agentis* seem to bring in something more. Being employed to describe the same entity, they point out the unity of experiencing behind the various sense-processes. Now, such unity is held by the canonical *Naiyāyika* systema-

4. Namely justifying the elusion of Uṣasta's pressing questions.

5. See for instance Śaṅkara's remarks *ad Kenopaniṣad (pada)* I, 4: « *Viditam nāma yad vidikriyayātisāyenāptam vidikriyā karmabhūtam / kvacitkiñcītkasyacitviditam syād iti sarvam eva vyākṛtaṁ viditam eva tasmād anyad eva ity arthaḥ* » and *ad* II, 3: « *avijñātam amatam aviditam eva brahma vijñātāṁ samyagviditavatām ity etat* ».

6. « *Pratyakṣam* » in the text under discussion.

7. For such a danger, cfr. for instance the criticism in regard of the *Madhyamika*-like character assumed by apophatic approach to Reality when not riding at the anchor of actual experience in *Upadeśasāhasrī (padyabandha)* III, 3: « *paratra cen niṣedhārthaṁ śūnyatāvarṇanam hi tat //* ».

tization to furnish us with a ground for inferring *ātman*'s existence apart from the senses and over them⁸. It is difficult to resist the suggestion of the idea that Śaṅkara is keeping well in view this argument, while treating the very theme to which it pertains. Taking into account the third *nomen agentis*, one is bound to note that it brings into the picture even the objects of experience consisting in internal feelings brought out through the *antaḥkaraṇa*: in point of fact, the appellation « *mantr̥* » is immediately evocatory of *maṭisādhana*⁹.

But there is also a third level of reading. Since, instead of Gautama's *sparśana*, the function of hearing is singled out to be juxtaposed to *darśana* in our text, the full team of *nomina agentis* in it actually covers the scope of the entire human knowledge. *Ātman* is individuated as the single common subject of each one of the several forms of such knowledge gained through the various *pramāṇa*-s¹⁰.

The line of argumentation for which Śaṅkara is possibly indebted to *Nyāya* is thereby made more substantial, and all-embracing in its implications: it is extended enough to infer a *sākṣin* whose role is intimate to every kind of objectual experience.

I.ii. *Difficulties Implicit in the Aforementioned Means of Individuation.*

The objection arisen against the *prima facie* formulation of *ātman*'s description shows how keen was Śaṅkara's awareness of the impasses to be met while maintaining, in the fashion of the *Naiyāyika*-s, the doctrine of an unitary role of *sākṣin* in the plurality of our experiences as the individuating feature thereof.

Albeit such a role be construed as a proof of actual existence, it, when closely examined, is discovered not to be useful at all for pointing out a concrete entity. As it is expressed in the *prima facie* statement, it but sums up a bundle of several distinct roles, each one of them being adventitious in regard of *ātman* in himself. Nor can we hope to make away with their adventitiousness simply by taking them all together: as every one fails, when considered in its own likeness, to give us a criterion for understanding *ātman* as he is, in his peculiar, substantial reality, they are not able to succeed, even when collectively adhibited to it, in such a task. The core of the problem is to be found in the relation between *ātman* and his field of experience: does it entail any kind of ultimate solidarity or continuity binding them, or does it prove to be merely extrinsic in regard of the subject?

8. Cfr. for instance *Nyāyasūtra* III, 1, 1-3.

9. Cfr. Vātsyāyana's remarks *ad Nyāyasūtra* III, 1, 16: « *evam mantuḥ sarvaviśayasya maṭisādhanam manāḥkaraṇabhūtaṃ sarvaviśayaṃ vidyate yenāyam manyata iti* ».

10. The *draṣṭṛ* being the subject of the cognitive processes collected under the head of *pratyakṣa*, the *śrotṛ* of the apprehension by way of authority and the diad *mantr̥-vijñātṛ* of the other processes of knowledge in which mediate as well as immediate understanding plays a prominent part, beginning with *anumāna*.

The objection under discussion takes up the second view, which is a well-known tenet of the *Kāṇāda-s*, and as such may lawfully be brought in when criticizing the coherence of a cognate *darśana's* position. Besides, there is some evidence that to Śaṅkara's mind this view appeared to be quite sound in the logical perspective. While dealing with the doctrine of the adventitiousness of *caitanya*¹¹, he marshals his arguments on the mere ground of *Śruti's* utterances, as usual when he feels that a tenet be scarcely confutable on the basis of actual experience and of its extension by way of a rational approach.

In point of fact, the strenght of the critic's contention in our passage could not — at least on the face of it — be greater. Let us admit, for the sake of the argument, that some kind of solidarity or continuity between *ātman* and experience be given. The desirability of such an admission is evident, since we are not aware of any independent feature of *ātman*, beside his role or roles inside the field of experience, enabling us to individuate him therein¹², and his solidarity with such field is an obvious condition for pointing him out through its medium.

But then, the manifoldness which everybody ascertains to affect the very field under consideration, together with mutability, *duḥkhatva* and other undesirable features which are intimately interrelated with it, shall of necessity affect *ātman* too, compromising his unity, immutability and freedom. If we deny that such is the case, it is very difficult to see how we shall be able consistently to deny even the ultimate adventitiousness of *ātman's* involvement in his roles, which connect him with his field of experience. The dilemma is, either *ātman* is found to be affected by experience's limitations, or his relationship with the ground of such limitations does not, in reality, concern him in his own nature: the price to pay for the lofty notion of the *sākṣin* seems to be the absence of any cue in respect of *ātmānubhava* to be discovered thereby!

I.iii. *Solution of the Difficulties.*

To unweave the riddle, *ātman's* role inside the pale of our experience must be construed in such a way, as to allow for his utmost independence from the changing features in objectual world and in the knowledge thereof, at the same time accounting for the actual *svarūpatva* of his function of *sākṣin* in our cognitive horizon. Śaṅkara endeavours to meet both these requirements, while turning to advantage the text of *Śruti* in *BĀU* III, 4, 2. He manages to accomplish such remarkable feat by a redoublement of *ātman's* position in the cognitive processes. He delineate a distinction between a first, inferior position, which is fully

11. See *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* II, 3, 18.

12. Cfr. Śaṅkara's remarks *ad Kenopaniṣad (pada)* I, 2: « *Yadi hi śrotrādivyāpāravyatiriktena svavyāpāreṇa viśiṣṭaḥ śrotrādīniyoktā avagamyaeta dātrādiprayoktṛtvāt tadedam ananurūpam prativacanam syāt / na tv iha śrotrādīnām prayoktā svavyāpāraviśiṣṭo lavitrādivād adhigamyate /* ».

solidary with these processes, founding his roles in their regard, but whose adventitiousness in respect of *ātman* himself is openly admitted, and a second, superior one, which is not adventitious and can be identified with the true *sākṣitva*. The distance of this second position of *ātman* from the cognitive processes, which it nevertheless makes possible, is granted by its connection with them via the first one, acting, as it were, in the wise of some kind of separating filter between *ātman* and the negative features of objectual world.

II.i. *The Redoublement of Going in Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakārikā as a Possible Source of Inspiration for Śaṅkara's Solution.*

The idea of the redoublement may have been suggested to the Ācārya by previous works. The first association that it recalls to our mind, is with an older paradoxical construction, whose original scope and function scarcely had anything to do with the problems pertaining to *ātman*'s individuation.

A cue for such association is to be found in the first of the two examples brought as a support to the objection advanced against the *prima facie* formulation. This example tends to show the unsatisfactoriness of any definition given in terms of a process of action in which the role of agent is played by the definiendum, precisely by pointing out the adventitiousness implied by such a criterion: « *na hi gamir eva gantuḥ svarūpam* ». To our knowledge, the first appearance of a structurally identical assumption, albeit of opposite sense, is found in the reduction on the part of the *Mādhyamika*-s of the ultimate reality of the *ganṭṛ* to his *gamikriyā*¹³. Such reduction, which seems to be suggested by the equipollency between *bhāva* and *kriyā* held by the *Sautrāntika*-s in the perspective of their doctrine of *kṣaṇamātrāstitva*, or by a similar conception, is introduced by the subtle dialecticians of the School of Void but for the sake of showing the absurdity of the whole process of action as envisaged through the deforming media of our linguistic categories. Of course, in the case of their tenets it would be quite wrong to read the ultimate reality of the *ganṭṛ* in the same light in which we read *svaṛūpatva* in other schools' treatises: here the metaphysical background is — abysmally! — different and the *ganṭṛ* is merely endowed with a *prajñaptisattā* for the sake of the argument. Yet, there is an undeniable familiar ring when we take into account the formulation of *Mādhyamika*-s side by side with Śaṅkara's one. Such being the case, we are entitled to look a little closer at their construction, in search of further parallel features. Perusing the text in which Nāgārjuna, apparently for the first time, introduced the example under

13. Cfr. for instance the clear statement made by Candrakīrti in his *Prasannapadā* II, 16, symmetrically opposed to the one put by Śaṅkara in the objector's mouth: « *vinā ca gamanam ganṭṛvyāpadeśo nāsti* ».

discussion, we shall find a distinction between two kinds of going. In its first version¹⁴, this distinction is outlined between the going-in-itself, on which the *gamyamāna* depends for his being precisely such, and the going in its concrete, phenomenical occurrence, that takes place with the *gamyamāna* as its locus. In its second version¹⁵, the distinction is conceived between going-in-itself on one side and actual going on the other, depending on the *gantṛ*, who is individuated through the former one.

Here we have a redoublement of the *gantṛ*'s ranking, as it were: while he proves to be utterly dependent from the going-in-itself, he is in his own turn dominant in regard of the actual going, which depends on him for its taking place. To construct his paradox, Nāgārjuna seemingly takes into account both the possible ways of understanding in terms of dependence the relation between an agent and his action¹⁶.

Leaving aside the obvious remark that in the buddhist teacher's presentation the redoublement is simply instrumental, for the sake of criticizing the naive model of the process of action as implied by the teachings of other *darśana*-s, and is far from attending a serious attempt to understand such a process, the structural affinities with the redoublement adopted by Śaṅkara is unmistakable.

II.ii. *The Two Śakti-s in Yogasūtra as Another Possible Source of Inspiration for Śaṅkara's Solution.*

A second association recalled by the treatment on the part of Śaṅkara of the redoublement, is the one with the presentation of the *sākṣin* to be found in Patañjali's *Yogasūtra*. That one be committed to accept or to dismiss the authenticity of the *vivaraṇa* ascribed to the *Ācārya* which is found attached to this text, his allegiance to the concept

of the *puruṣa*, as held by both *Sāṃkhya* — and *Yogadarśana*-s, in so far as it is not in contrast with the *aupaniṣada* tenets, cannot be denied¹⁷.

Now, if we peruse the *sūtra*-s in search of some common feature with the passage under discussion, we shall firstly discover that the choosing on the part of Śaṅkara of the formulation « *dṛṣṭer draṣṭā* », of all possible ones, for his discussion, while it could depend on mere

14. Cfr. *Mūlamadhyamakārikā* II, 5 f.: « *gamyamānasya gamane prasaktaṃ gamanadvaye / yena tad gamyamānaṃ ca yac cātra gamanam punaḥ //* » etc.

15. Cfr. *Ibidem*, II, 11: « *gamane dve prasajyete gantā yady uta gacchati / ganteti cājyate yena gantā san yac ca gacchati //* ».

16. In the first version of the distinction, Nāgārjuna takes in that relation merely in the sense of a dependence of the action on the agent, with the result of redoubling the agent himself, instead of his ranking in regard of the action: so the paradox concerns a first *gantṛ*, who is the agent of the atemporal and abstract action of going-in-itself, and a second one, who is the agent of empirical going.

17. See Śaṅkara's remarks *ad Brahmasūtra* II, 1, 3: « *yena tv aṃśena na vi-rudhyete teneṣṭām eva sāmkhya-yogasmṛtyoḥ sāvakāśatvam / tad yathā 'saṅgo hy ayam puruṣaḥ'* » etc.

order of presentation in *Śruti*'s text, corresponds to the conception of Patañjali too. In his aphorisms, the theorist of *Yoga* selects the very same role as individuating the nature of the subject: « *draṣṭā drṣīmā-traḥ* »¹⁸, while the term « *drṣi* » finds a truly enthusiastic reception by the *Ācārya* in his own treating of the pure subject¹⁹. On the other hand, when describing the *kleśa* known as « *asmitā* », the *Sūtrakāra* distinguishes between a *drkśakti*, which is tantamount for the *sākṣin* himself, and a *darśanaśakti*, which is pertaining to the cognitive processes as apart from him²⁰. We have here a redoublement that, when one recollects the *drṣi* equipollent to the *puruṣa*, gives us two separate and distinct seeings, just as in Śaṅkara's construction. It is certainly difficult to dismiss the possibility that he is somewhat indebted to Patañjali for the formulation thereof.

III.i. Introduction of the Genitives of Internal Object and Shifting from the Process of Action to the Cognitive One.

Having shown the apparent untenability of the role as *sākṣin*, if presented in its *Naiyāyika*-like rough-cast formulation, as a criterion of *ātman*'s individuation, Śaṅkara causes his *uttarapakṣin* to quote in full the formulation given in *BĀU* III, 4, 2, with its genitives of internal object. The reaction of the opponent to such move is calculated to afford a hooking point for the gnoseological development of the fuller formulation: the *Bhāṣyakāra* makes him take for granted the distinction between *drṣṭi* and *draṣṭṛ*, following the very pattern of those between *gami* and *ganṭṛ* and between *chidi* and *chetṛ* that he himself has just being tracing, then proceed to show the adventitiousness implicit even in this richer formulation of the criterion. But, in delineating such new criticism, the opponent cannot any more stick to his former thread of

18. *Yogasūtra* II, 20.

19. Cfr. for instance *Upadeśasāhasrī* (*padhyabandha*) II, 3: « *drṣir ekaḥ svayaṃ-siddhaḥ* »; X, 1: « *drṣisvarūpaṃ gaganopamam param* »; X, 2: « *drṣis tu śuddho'ham avikriyātmako* »; XII, 9: « *drṣirūpe sadā nitye darśanādarśane mayi katham syātām* »; XIV, 44: « *drṣisvarūpeṇa hi sarvadehinām viyad yathā vyāpya manāṃsi* »; XVIII, 205: « *drṣir evānubhūyate* ».

20. *Yogasūtra* II, 6: « *Drṅdarśanaśaktyor ekātmatevāsmiṭā* ». As Vyāsa puts it, « *puruṣo drkśaktir buddhir darśanaśaktir iti* »; Bhoja develops the latter half of this statement: « *darśanaśaktiḥ rajastamobhyām anabhibhūtaḥ sāttvikaḥ pariṇāmo 'ntaḥkaraṇarūpaḥ* ». Another distinction between two *śakti*-s is to be found in *Yogasūtra* II, 23, where they are said to be respectively *svaśakti* and *svāmiśakti*, where the second one obviously corresponds to *drkśakti* as well as to *citiśakti* spoken of in the same text, IV, 34). The term « *drkśakti* » may originally have been introduced referring to a more dynamical conception than that of the *puruṣa*: the connection of Patañjali's text with *Pāsupata* praxis (on which see D. N. LORENZEN, *The Kāpālikas and Kālāmukhas*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972, p. 189 and n. 80) suggests the possibility that he is re-employing a key-word of that *darśana*, denoting a positive feature of *siddhi* as acquisition of *aivśvarya* as well as of *duḥkḥānta*, which embodies the fivefold knowledge discovered in the subject once separated from his limited mind (cfr. on this argument *Pāsupatasūtra* I, 18 ff.).

thought, treating experience as any simple process of action. As a matter of fact, he is now confronted with a formulation that stresses the character of role in a specifically cognitive process ascribed to the suggested element of individuation and a different argument has to be furnished, taking into account such freshly brought in perspective. This shifting of point of view is not bereft of importance: it is connected with the absolute otherness of knowledge in regard of action recurring as a sort of *leit-motive* in Śaṅkara's works²¹ and the difference of treatment forced upon the *pūrvapakṣin* in the ensuing discussion may be considered as a further argument in favour of such idea.

III.ii. *Different Positions of Subject in the Process of Action and in the Cognitive One.*

While the subject as acting is, quite obviously, separated from his action, both because he may well dispense with it and because it, as it were, flows out from him as something extraneous, which but the principle of imputability will keep in connection with him (till his fruition of the action's results), the subject as knower is not playing so clean-cut a part in the cognitive process. His relation with *viśaya-s* is deeper and more intimate: they are, true enough, something less real than he is, and as such absolutely different from him, but they keep depending on the subject for their very subsistence as *viśaya-s*, just as Nāgārjuna's empirical going depends on the *ganṭṛ*. So they do not become, as the action's products, something exterior and more or less independent in regard of the subject's role.

In Śaṅkara's perspective, of course, their dependence is, from the point of view of absolute reality, as illusory as their separate subsistence and identity qua *viśaya-s*: such a relation will plainly be severed at the moment of *mukti*, on the side of *viśayin*. Nevertheless, on the side of *viśaya-s* the intimateness thereof will persist, may be intensified, their otherness being somewhat sublated.

Such being the case, the cognitive role's approach is much apter to convey the actual solidarity with the element — whose apparent extrin-

21. The very independence and autonomy of *Vedānta* as a *pramāṇa* in its own right in face of Vedic *karmakāṇḍa*, against the *Mīmāṃsaka* tenets, depends on the otherness under discussion; the objective validity of knowledge, which is related only to the state of actual facts, as contrasted with *puruṣatantratva* of action, is the best guarantee of the meaningfulness of the *aupaniṣada* statements about *Brahman*, disproving the *Mīmāṃsaka* view that such statements are simply concerned with some fictitious mental representation for the sake of *upāsana*. Again, it is but the absence in the case of knowledge of those limitations regarding time, which pertain to action and its result, that enables us to maintain the eternity of the permanence in the state of *mukti*, while the peculiar structure of knowledge's results, being concerned only with the annihilation of mistakes and not of actually existing things, is the basis of the all-important ontological judgement pronounced in regard of the world considered as *māyā*.

sicity is under discussion — employed to individuate the definiendum, than the approach through a process of action. On the other hand, when considered from the point of view of the subject himself, his relation with the process of knowledge as a whole is looser than the acting's relation with the process of action, which does not admit of an indifferent plurality of actions being correlated to the subject's role, but implies just one of them under such role (e.g. the *ganṭṛ* is such only in regard of the specific action of *gati*). The subject as knower not being submitted to any such limitation, since in his role there is scope for every possible object, he is disentangled from the dependence on a particular event. So, on the subject's side we find a road already traced for *ātman*'s independence in regard of changing features in objectual experience, while on the object's side the cognitive role's approach affords us a certain ease in conserving the continuity with the individuating element.

By trying to cut across the structural relationship binding *dr̥ṣṭi* with *draṣṭṛ*, in order to prove the first's adventitiousness in regard of the second, the opponent admirably serves Śaṅkara's purpose: that very task will actually be performed by the *uttarapakṣin*, founding on the ground of their ultimate dichotomy the entire gnoseological perspective of the *Ācārya*, whereas the solidarity between the experience and *sākṣin* will be left untouched.

III.iii. *Solidarity of the Subject with the Cognitive Process, notwithstanding his Independence therefrom.*

The opponent shifts to a new argument by maintaining that the subject as knower — in the selected instance the *draṣṭṛ* — cannot possibly be individuated through his role in the cognitive process either, since such a role is too wide, consisting as it does of the mere witnessing the cognitive process as an object, in the same way as any other object in our experience. The apparent specification given by the genitive of internal object is actually concerning not the subject as such, but his spectacle, which admittedly can be considered adventitious²².

One is bound to remark that the independence of *ātman* is so vindicated, preparing the ground for the distinction of the two *dr̥ṣṭi*-s. But, before introducing that distinction, the setting apart of the subject from objectual experience would be premature indeed, because then we should not be able to keep his solidarity with it, as the opponent perceives. Therefore, Śaṅkara takes good care of refuting the objection at this stage, by pointing out that the witnessing on the part of the subject is a permanent feature of his.

In point of fact, while the subject as acting can easily be separated by such role, with which we can dispense as well as with the specific

22. « *Draṣṭā tu yadi dr̥ṣṭeḥ yadi vā ghaṭasya draṣṭā draṣṭaiva* ».

action correlated with it, the case is quite different with the subject as knower. Because of the dependence on him of experience as a whole, he does not admit of any breach of his solidarity with his knowership, or with his knowing, for that matter, whenever the cognitive process takes place²³.

In support of his view, Śaṅkara appeals to the very structure of our experience: if there were an absolute discontinuity between the subject and his role as knower, there would be not only the implication of the possibility of his dispensing with it, a conclusion that *Kāṇāda*-s willingly accept and that indeed seems not to be unreasonable, but also of its dispensing with him, becoming in some way separated and autonomous in regard of the knower. We would face some instances in which objectual experience takes place without actually being witnessed by a subject, just as any other object witnessed by us can subsist independently from our witnessing it. But such is not the case: not only our experience does not present these instances, but the very idea of them is not consistent with the structure of cognitive process as apprehended in our daily life.

III.iv. Introduction of the Two *Dr̥ṣṭi*-s.

While exposing his argument, Śaṅkara skilfully lets in a hint to an altogether different position of the subject in experience. He admits of a breach of solidarity, which is found to open between our witnessing and the object witnessed, intermittently present as it is in the cognitive process. Now, this second feature of such process, while not affecting *ātman*'s continuity with it as a whole, implies the existence of a second, inferior, role of his in regard of it²⁴. The core of the solution is so reached: a critical examination of the genitive of internal object leads to the distinction between two dimensions, one permanent and the second fleeting, in experience, and to the consequent redoublement of *ātman*'s position in it.

The inferior position, which is structurally near to Nāgārjuna's empirical going, is continuous with cognitive process in its concreteness, but, depending as it does on the vicissitudes thereof, lacks a solidarity with *ātman* himself; it corresponds to *ātman*'s role as knower envisaged by the *Vaiśeṣika* doctrine, which is in this way absorbed into the wider perspective of Śaṅkara's construction. In contrast with it, the superior

23. « *Na kadācid api dr̥ṣṭir na dr̥śyate draṣṭā* ».

24. In contrast with the permanent character of the first role, which can be regarded as the exact counterpart of the permanent fact of being witnessed, the second one, as related to the different objects, is called « *anityā dr̥ṣṭi* », implicitly agreeing that the view expressed in the counter-objection does not apply in its instance, because the second role proves not to be solidary at all with *ātman*: « *tatra dr̥śyā yā dr̥ṣṭiḥ sā kadācin na dr̥śyetāpi yathā 'nityayā dr̥ṣṭyā ghaṭādi vastu* ».

position, which we could somehow assimilate to Nāgārjuna's atemporal going-in-itself²⁵, being always solidary with *ātman* and therefore enabling us to individuate him through its medium, is not affected by the ephemeral contents in experience, but only entertains a relation with the cognitive process in itself. It is the unchanging ground of experience, the witnessing going on throughout each and every alteration undergone by the aforesaid contents. It is also the only available distinctive feature of subject inside our gnoseological horizon: either we treat it as his *svarūpa*, or we are left in the lurch with his utter inaccessibility to thought.

III.v. Relation between the Two Dṛṣṭi-s.

But if, by our individuation of him, we are able to recognize *ātman* as the *sākṣin* always present at the very bottom of our witnessing, as we *feel* such a witnessing, we are not empowered thereby to bring him before us, as it were, encompassing him like an object, as it is so often the case with the subject in Western philosophical outlook. The fact of witnessing in its higher dimension, being rid of solidarity with its contents, evidently cannot become one more instance of them, just as an abstract entity cannot become a concrete one. Yet *ātman*, as envisaged by Saṅkara, is far from abstract. The *Bhāṣyakāra*'s device of individuation brings *sākṣin* inside the field of our awareness with immediate evidence as the very stuff, as it were, of which such awareness is made.

Instead of being too far from the scope of experience for our discovering him as a phenomenon inside it, *ātman* in his superior role is too near, as it were, to its core for allowing the involved cognitive operation, mediated through an intellectual ascertainment. Such is the price we need pay for the non-relational use of a relational definition: a result somewhat similar to the one obtained dealing with an abstract idea of the subject, it is true, even if the setting apart of the definiendum in respect of every and all particular features in actual experience is here achieved in a way *toto coelo* different from abstracting. At any rate, we are not able to seize hold of the permanent dimension in our experience, in the same way as an item thereof. The better we can do, on the intellectual level, is to work out a coherent structure of interpretation using symbols instead of actual concepts. Saṅkara makes clear such limitations from the very beginning of his presentation of the two dimensions of experience.

25. But the *Advaitin*'s notion is a much solidier counterpart of the slender paradoxical construction of the Buddhist dialectician: through it, Saṅkara invites our attention to the very fundamentals of our existence as knowing beings: our life's primordial reality, the less external one, whose absence or eclipsing is never met regardless of what is taking place in front of us. To a shrewdly conceived structure devised to show the inconsistencies of language's pattern relating to experience, what corresponds in the *aupaniṣada* theorization is a deep and sound approach to experience's inmost and concretest face, preceding every interpretation of it.

The device of this presentation is a *praśna* arising from the previous introduction on the part of the *uttarapakṣin* of the idea of *anityā dṛṣṭi*: «*kim dve dṛṣṭi draṣṭur nityādrśyānityā dṛśyete*»; the knowability of *ātman*'s two roles becomes in this way of opposite sign in regard of their permanence and solidarity with *āman* himself. We have here the full measure of Śaṅkara's genius in coordinating the exigencies of his views with the natural features of gnoseological perspective: are we faced with an objectifiable *anityā dṛṣṭi* and an unobjectifiable *nityā* one? Well then, *anityā dṛṣṭi* will prove to be the object witnessed by *ātman*, who, as a subject, will be recognized to be the same as the *nityā* one, which is his own *svarūpa*. *Nityā dṛṣṭi* consequently witnesses as *sākṣin* the *anityā* one: such is the only relation intelligibly configurable between them: not an ontological, but a gnoseological one. On one side we have the whole objectual world, together with the inferior dimension of cognitive processes connecting us with it, including our role in respect of such connection as well; on the other side, there is the subjective counterpart of the fact of being witnessed by us, the only constant feature uniting the ephemeral events of our daily experience into some sort of continuity and perennity: «*nityam eva paśyan*». Our role on the first side becomes, as it were, the shadow of this second, superior one: a shadow occasionally cast to touch objectual world in its intermittent manifestation, and participating in its objectual character by the very act of touching it. The nexus is one-sided between the two *dṛṣṭi*-s: while the *anityā* one, as a shadow, can subsist only in the presence of the casting *nityā* reality and of the objects touched through it, its own presence, as well as the objects' one, can very well be dispensed with by the superior *dṛṣṭi*.

III.vi. Implications of the Aforesaid Relation.

The apophatical trend in the *Upaniṣad*-s, constituting the backbone of the *Kevalādvaita* reading of *Brahman*'s trans-notional presentation therein, finds in the articulation of the two *dṛṣṭi*-s a new perspicuity. The one-sidedness of such articulation explains *ātman*'s inaccessibility to objectual apprehension: «*nivartate hi draṣṭur viśayadrśtyākāṅkṣā tada-sambhavād eva / na hy avidyamāne viśaye ākāṅkṣā kasyacid upajāyate / na ca dṛśyā dṛṣṭir draṣṭāraṃ viśayikartum utsahate / yatas tām ākāṅkṣeta*». The fact that Śaṅkara chooses to configure *ātman*'s hypothetical apprehension as taking place through his inferior role in experience, is quite significant. He refuses to make appeal to any «intuitional» approach in substitution of normal cognitive processes, which at their best can but give us the indirect approach to *ātman* we have been discussing²⁶. That depends on his considering cognitive process as an

26. «*Na ca draṣṭur nityaiva dṛṣṭir ity evaṃ vijñāte draṣṭṛviśayāṃ dṛṣṭim anyām ākāṅkṣate*».

inseparable whole. To suppose that the *sākṣin*, in his superior role alone, could directly apprehend himself, is to show a bad awareness of the structural limitation to be found in our experience: bereft of his inferior role, *ātman*'s presence would coincide with pure and simple being, nor could we speak any more of apprehension²⁷.

Such gnoseological necessity to look upon the hypothetic apprehension of the subject as involving both his roles implies, of course, the ultimate refutation of the hypothesis itself, owing to the irresoluble contradictions involved therein: the statement of Yājñavalkya in his answer to Uddālaka²⁸ is thus shown fully to be consistent with the genitives of internal object in *BĀU* III, 4, 2.

This approach is employed by the *Bhāṣyakāra* elsewhere too, and it can be considered typical of his outlook in the matter. When dealing with *ātman*'s hypothetic relationship with objectual world, as exemplified by *avidyā*, in his commentary upon *BhG*. XIII, 2²⁹, he works up such relationship's unknowability much in the same form here taken into account³⁰.

There, true enough, the argument introduced by the *Ācārya* to strengthen his point seemingly gives us a picture somewhat differing from the one so far thought representative of his views. Taking in the structural limitation pointed out in *Yogasūtra* IV, 19³¹, Śaṅkara shows the gnoseological impossibility of witnessing our own relation with objectual experience when we are already engrossed in it. Such witnessing would require a second witness, whose relation with it would in its turn be apprehended by a third one, and so on, against our actual experience, that does not include anything of that sort. While such an argument somehow assimilates the apprehension of the relation to that of objectual world itself in the *bhāṣya ad BĀU* I, 4, 10, its very form apparently implies a witnessing of objectual experience and — by way

27. Śaṅkara is quite explicit on this point while commenting upon *BĀU* III, 9, 28, 7: cognitive processes are bodily phenomena and their eventual cessation in *mukti* will not let any place for self-knowledge. On the other hand, the actual possibility of individuating *ātman* in the way under discussion depends on cognitive processes, for their absence would make it unattainable: see for instance Śaṅkara's remarks *ad BĀU* IV, 3, 30: « *upādhibhedavyāpārānivr̥ttāṁ anubhāṣyamanatvād anupalakṣyamānasvabhāvam* ».

28. *BĀU* III, 7, 3-23.

29. The abbreviation « *BhG* » stands henceforth for « *Bhagavadgītā* ».

30. There is on one hand the superior role of the subject as knower, identical with him, and on the other side the objectual experience. The only relation between them is the merely gnoseological one between witness and witnessed: « *yadi punaḥ avidyā jñeyānyad vā jñeyam jñeyam eva / tathā jñātāpi jñatāiva na jñeyam bhavati* ». Any other, ontological, relation is inaccessible to our cognitive approach.

31. « *Ekasamaye cobhayānavadharāṇam* ». In Patañjali's exposition, this limitation is brought in as an argument against the « *scio me scire* » held by Buddhist *Yogācāra*-s to be characteristic of each *kṣaṇa*, or against some akin doctrine as those developed by *Pūrvamīmāṃsā*, whose final presentation only is known to us. The *regressus ad infinitum* in the immediately following *sūtra* corresponds to the argument in Śaṅkara's commentary.

of hypotesis — of the relation with it on the part of *nityā dṛṣṭi*, against Śaṅkara's position in the passage under discussion in the present article.

Otherwise, the consequence of the presence of a second witness could not be pointed out as an absurdity, since in the case of *anityā dṛṣṭi* such presence should be taken as granted. But if this analysis of Śaṅkara's argument *ad BhG. XIII, 2* is correct, the implication shall be a construction of the hypothetical apprehension of the relation with objectual experience as taking place without a normal cognitive process, just as the apprehension of *anityā dṛṣṭi* on the part of the *nityā* one. The objectification of the relation would so be quite different from the objectification rejected in the case of self-apprehension in our passage, a feat proving impossible through *anityā dṛṣṭi*.

If we stick to the gnoseological framework without taking into account its ontological background we cannot but be puzzled by the apparent incongruity just pointed out. Once such background is taken in, however, and the judgement attained through the gnoseological approach is considered in ontological terms, the perspective as a whole is found to be perfectly consistent. While unknowability through *anityā dṛṣṭi*, a limited and ultimately vanishing set of cognitive processes, does not necessarily bring with it a lack of reality³², the unknowability through the *nityā* dimension of experience is tantamount to such deficiency, since the *sākṣin*'s superior role does not admit of any limitation whatsoever and furnishes us with a unique standard of ontological judgement based on gnoseological fact³³. So, if Śaṅkara had treated *sambandhagrahaṇa*, while commenting upon *BhG. XIII, 2*, in the same way as *draṣṭur viṣayadṛṣṭi* in the passage under consideration, he would have implicitly admitted of an absolute real relation between *ātman* and objectual world, against his own tenets, while if he had treated *draṣṭur viṣayadṛṣṭi* in the same way as *sambandhagrahaṇa* not only he would have denied the possibility of self-knowledge on the part of *ātman*, but his reality as well, showing Yājñavalkya's definition to be self-contradictory and inconsistent. Of course, in Śaṅkara's view, *nityā dṛṣṭi* cannot possibly apprehend itself, at least in the same way as it apprehends the *anityā* one, but it is always present as witnessing, in a more evident way than the witnessed, and such evidence is through *nityā dṛṣṭi*'s *svayamprakāśatva*. We have just spoken of the absence of any limitation in regard of *nityā dṛṣṭi*. But one could well argue that such is not apparently the case, since Śaṅkara's adaptation of Pata-

32. It brings with itself such lack in the case of an object which would normally be knowable through such processes, e.g. a hare's horn, which would be perceivable if present. But in *ātman*'s case that unknowability is but the negative side of the immediateness of his absolute reality, the foremost condition for existence of experience itself.

33. So it is the fact of being witnessed by him that rescues objectual world from pure and simple inexistence, notwithstanding its *anityatva*, and allows us to bring in *anirvacanīyatā* as an intermediate ontological condition for it.

ñjali's argument seems to imply that the witnessing on the part of *nityā dṛṣṭi* of *avidyā* and objectual world as well takes place in time, being limited to one single witnessed, in a given instant³⁴.

Now, the atemporality of *ātman* is an important tenet of *Kevalādvaitavāda*³⁵. Such being the case, how are we to read the aforementioned implication?

Should we contrast the limitations pointed out *ad BhG.* XIII, 2, admittedly pertaining to an opponent under the sway of *avidyā*, with the freedom from them enjoyed by the knower of Reality? The point is, the *Ācārya* is not prepared to acknowledge *avidyā* as something really capable to limit *nityā dṛṣṭi*. According to his view, it is but an object like every other one: otherwise it would become an intrinsic characteristic of the subject, making *mukti* no longer possible³⁶. It is therefore uncanny to extend *avidyā*'s influence as limitating factor to the enlightening on the part of *nityā dṛṣṭi* of the *anityā* one, which includes *avidyā* itself. Probably the whole matter should be regarded on both sides, objectual as well as subjectual: from the point of view of the witnessed, every instant is a limited field, excluding from the enlightenment taking place in respect to it the possibility of enlightening at the same time any other thing, whereas from the point of view of the witness each and every instant's contents is enlightened together with the other ones, in past, present and future. The unknowability of the *sambandha* proves to be relative to a particular instant, in the limited perspective of the identification with it on the part of the

34. The very core of Śaṅkara's argument runs along these lines: « *na hi tava jñātuh jñeyabhūtayā avidyayā tatkāle sambandhaḥ grahituṃ śakyate avidyayā viśayatvenaiva jñātuh upayuktatvāt* ».

35. In *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* II, 3, 7, Śaṅkara clearly states that past, present and future are relative to the witnessed and not to the witness: « *tathāham evedāniṃ jānāmi vartamānaṃ vastv aham evātītam atītaraṃ cājñāsiṣam aham evānāgatam anāgataraṃ ca jñāsyāmīty atītānāgatavartamānabhāvenānyathā bhavaty api jñātavye na jñātur anyathābhāvo'sti sarvadā vartamānasvabhāvatvāt* ». *Ātman*'s perennial presentiality as contrasted with temporal mutations of objectual world seemingly implies that *nityā dṛṣṭi* simultaneously, as it were, witnesses each and every form of the *anityā* one in past, present and future: such conclusion is in harmony with Śaṅkara's statement while commenting upon *Taittirīyopaniṣad* II, 1, concerning *Brahman*'s omniscience regardless of time and space (« *sarvabhāvānāṃ ca tenāvi-bhaktadeśakālatvāt kālākāśādīkāraṇatvāt niratisāyasūksmatvāc ca / na tasyānyad avijñeyaṃ sūkṣmaṃ vyavahitaṃ viprakṛṣṭam bhūtam bhavad bhaviṣyad vāsti / tasmāt sarvajñaṃ tad brahma* ») and with his application of the very same omniscience to *Brahman*'s knower in the same passage: here it is stated that the enlightenment on the part of *nityā dṛṣṭi* of an indefinite plurality of *kāma*-s takes simultaneously place: « *saha yugapat ekakṣaṇopārudhāneva ekayopalabdhyā savitī-prakāśavan nityayā brahmasvarūpavyatirikṭayā* ». The implication of *ātman*'s atemporality is quite clear, as Sureśvara shows in his *vārtika*, II, 122: « *Ekayākravartinyā vyāpnoti kramavartināḥ* ».

36. Cfr. for instance Śaṅkara's remarks *ad BĀU* IV, 4, 6: « *viśayatvopapattēs ca / yasya cāvidyābhramo ghaṭādīvad vivikto gṛhyate sa nāvidyābhramavān /* » etc. In the very passage occasionating the present discussion, *avidyā* is equated with the other *jñeya*-s: « *avidyā jñeyā anyad vā jñeyaṃ jñeyam eva* ».

ignorant being, but such unknowability involves *ātman* himself in so far as he is witnessing that instant. The *sambandha* being inexistent, the question is but hypothetical, however one would like to know whether in Śaṅkara's view the enlightenment of it on the part of *nityā dṛṣṭi* could alternatively be construed as not related to the instant, and so taking place simultaneously with the enlightenment of all the structure of objectual world, from the point of view of absolute Reality. In that case, the unknowability of the *sambandha* would be even stronger as argument against its existence!

IV.i. *Proof of Anityā Dṛṣṭi.*

The inferior role of *ātman* in cognitive processes is discovered inside the scope of our everyday experience. For its individuation, Śaṅkara refers to the possibility of ascertaining the actual failing of seeing in beings normally provided with it. The intermittent presence to our awareness of seeing and blindness³⁷ goes against the idea that the higher role of *ātman* in cognitive processes, beside being solidary with him, be solidary with them also, granting their non-sublatability.

The inferior role, due to its solidarity with objectual experience, is exposed to the very vicissitudes of it and its contents, beginning with vanishing from the horizon of experience itself. We directly perceive the fact that experience can dispense with each and every object as well as with their whole, e.g. in *śuṣupti* or *samādhi*. But the instance brought in by the Ācārya has the merit of leaving alone our normal waking knowledge while sublating the sector of its role corresponding to seeing proper: by extension, *anityā dṛṣṭi* can be enlarged till it comprehends the whole of such role, since the sublatability of it in relation to a single kind of apprehension implies the possibility of repeating the feat in relation to the rest of them too. The *Kāṇāda* views about *ātman*'s position in regard of experience are so vindicated. The problem is, on what basis are we entitled to speak of a *nityā dṛṣṭi* which does not conform to such views?

IV.ii. *Proof of Nityā Dṛṣṭi. Śabdapramāṇa.*

The first argument put forth by Śaṅkara is the authority of *Sruti*'s utterance, in the form of Yājñavalkya's statement about the *avināśitātva* of *sākṣin*'s role in each perceptive and cognitive process³⁸. When analysing such statement in his commentary *ad BĀU* IV, 3, 23, he, significantly enough, deals once again with the instance of *dṛṣṭi*, developing it in a neat picture articulated in the frame we are already familiar with. After explaining the somewhat cryptic « *paśyan vai na paśyati* » in the

37. « *Andhānandhatvadarśanāt* ».

38. See *BĀU* IV, 3, 23-30.

sense of actual presence of our experience in *suṣupti*, the *Bhāṣyakāra* introduces the statement under discussion as an answer to an objection expressing the very difficulty we have been taking into account. The opponent is made to contend *aupaniṣada* position on the ground that in actual experience we have but the inferior role of subject, bereft of *nityatva*, since it disappears in deep sleep. In the instance of *drṣṭi*, when the adventitious working of the *kāraṇa*-s, namely the eye and the *sensorium commune*, ceases, we are left undoubtedly without seeing, neither is there any cue in experience for a second seeing which is not lost thereby. As a matter of fact, if we were left without *Śruti*'s teaching, we could not discover the superior role of *sākṣin* at all. Only thanks to such teaching we are enabled to reflect on it in a rational outlook and eventually to realize its actual presence.

The first step is to show that *avināśitatva* makes sense at all. The instance quoted by Śaṅkara to prove the possibility of a *nitya* dimension of experience as the very *svarūpa* of the subject — a favourite of his ³⁹ — puts the solidarity between *ātman* and his superior role in a form compatible with everyday experience. The second step is a trial that *Śruti*'s statement must undergo not to be discarded as valueless for cognitive purposes. Once again the difference between a definition given in terms of a process of knowledge and a definition given in terms of a process of action is brought under consideration. The opponent is made to remark that apprehension, as exemplified by seeing, is an action ⁴⁰, and as such cannot but be adventitious. So Yājñavalkya's assumption is not effectual. The argument is corroborated on linguistic ground: if we are to make use of a new reading of experience suggested by *Śruti*, since such suggestion follows an acknowledged linguistic pattern — the opponent somewhat optimistically implies — we are bound to accept such pattern as reflecting Reality's true articulation. Now, the term «*draṣṭṛ*» by its very structure refers to a subject as agent: therefore the process of *drṣṭi* should be considered an action ⁴¹. Before dealing with this contention on its own ground, Śaṅkara denies the adventitiousness brought in by the opponent by simply quoting for the second time the *avināśitatva* statement he is trying to justify. Far from being a *petitio principii*, this quotation occasionate the discussion on the status of the passage, whose authoritativeness' defence is a logically prior step to the linguistic analysis. The opponent is made to rise the point of the limits of *Śruti*'s validity as a means of knowledge, in so far as it deals with normal experience, whose data it cannot overcome ⁴². In order to show that here we have no conflict with experience, and therefore the statement can

39. The simile of fire's *auṣṇya* is employed in countless passages by Śaṅkara.

40. «*Drṣṭiś ca draṣṭā kriyate*».

41. «*Drṣṭikartrvādd hi draṣṭety ucyate*».

42. «*Na hi nyāyapṛāpto vināśaḥ kṛtakasya vacanasatenāpi vārayitum śakyate*».

Cfr. Śaṅkara's well-known remarks *ad BhG XVIII*, 66: «*Na hi pratyakṣavirodhe śruteḥ prāmāṇyam*».

be accepted as a useful, nay indispensable source of knowledge in its own right, Śaṅkara introduces the instance of *prakāśakatva* on the part of luminous objects. Its solidarity with them is not in doubt: here we have a structure like the one under discussion, which so is proved to be perfectly possible. True enough, on mere grammatical ground enlightening can be construed as an action, just as it is the case with *drṣṭi*, but the interpretation along linguistic pattern of the process is patently inadequate. Action implies a temporal discontinuity, which is responsible for its adventitiousness in regard of the agent, whereas in the instance of *prakāśakatva* such discontinuity is not to be found⁴³.

The enlightening, since it implies the idea of a luminous source independent from illuminated objects, is a particularly well chosen simile amidst the wealth of them found in the *Upaniṣad*-s. It forms, as it were, an intermediate step between the process of action and the cognitive one. By introducing such example, Śaṅkara shows that there are, in actual experience, instances of phenomena which, albeit they allow for a subject, an object and something that takes place between the two, cannot possibly be construed as processes of action. What Śruti does, is but to point out another instance of those peculiar phenomena, where that something between subject and objects is non-adventitious in regard of the former⁴⁴.

The linguistic argument is then taken into account. After having disposed of the apparent *gaṇatva* of the term «*draṣṭṛ*»⁴⁵, Śaṅkara restates it at length⁴⁶ and refutes it simply by quoting the instance of *prakāśayitr*, as an evident case of conflict between the literal implications of the agency suffix and our understanding of the referent. The terms in «*-tr*» are so proved to individuate, side by side with agents (their natural referents), also subjects of processes in a more general way.

43. It would imply the absurdity of a luminous source not illuminating: «*na hy aprakāśātmanah santaḥ prakāśaṃ kurvantaḥ prakāśayantīty ucyante*».

44. «*Svabhāvika*» in the passage under discussion.

45. This difficulty arises if we construct the term as describing the subject in terms of his *nityā drṣṭi* instead of the «normal» *anityā* one. Śaṅkara's awareness of the importance thereof can be seen by his treatment of *dhātvartha* as connected with the *nitya* dimension of experience while discussing the well-known definition «*satyaṃ jñānam anantaṃ brahma*» in *Taittirīyopaniṣad* II, 1, under the term «*jñāna*»: there he traces such connection to a misconception on the part of non-discriminating people, the true one being but with the *anitya* dimension of experience. Here, on the contrary, the true role as *sākṣin* is shown to be the superior one, solidary with *ātman*. The adventitious, inferior role cannot consistently be attributed to it as separated from the former: but only if such were the case, we could manage to find out a *mukhyārtha* in the sense required by the difficulty: «*yadi hi anyathāpi ātmano draṣṭṛtvaṃ drṣṭaṃ tadāśya draṣṭṛtvasya gaṇatvam*». It can be remarked, by the way, that the impossibility of configurating here the two *artha*-s permits us to escape a redoublement of subject like the one implied by Nāgārjuna's two goings.

46. *Inter alia*, he quotes the homologous terms «*chetṛ*», «*bhetṛ*» and «*ganṭṛ*», two of which are introduced in the passage ad *BĀU* I, 4, 10 too, a further indication of the close touch, in the Ācārya's views, of *BĀU* IV, 3, 23 with that passage.

Having in this way accomplished the passage from the process of action to the cognitive one, and vindicated both meaningfulness and relevance of the *avināśitatva* statement, *Śaṅkara* makes the opponent, even if forced to admit that his argument does not apply in the case of *prakāśayitṛ*, still deny that such is the case in regard of *draṣṭṛ*: after all, if we are not able to conceive of a lack of solidarity between enlightening and enlightener, that does not imply that we cannot conceive of it in the case of seeing and seer also! The answer is the quotation, for the third time, of the *avināśitatva* statement: having shown that it is not contrasting with normal experience and that our linguistic structures can be stretched till they somehow encompass a wider field of reference than their natural one, so as to be conceived as compatible with it, there is no reason left to refuse its import as a means of knowledge in its own right. Hence the objection falls as a matter of course: such is the way with *śabdapramāṇa*.

IV.iii. *Proof of Nityā Drṣṭi. Anumāna.*

After the introduction of *Śruti*'s teachings, with their decisive cognitive import, the use of other *pramāṇa*-s appears somewhat doubtful: not only their reach is admittedly radically different in respect of *Śruti*'s one, so that their introduction would mean the possible inapplicability of *Śruti* to the case under discussion, but *ātman* is well-known to transcend such reach⁴⁷. Yet *Śaṅkara* thinks it useful to bring in even an *anumāna*, just in case that somebody appeal to immediate experience against *avināśitatva*⁴⁸. Inside such experience's scope, the *Bhāṣyakāra* points out repeatedly⁴⁹, there is a cue to something more than *anityā drṣṭi*: namely, the fact that even bereft of their bodily visual apparatus blind people are noticed to see in their dreams. From such fact, that is in itself but an instance of *anityā drṣṭi*, having as its object instead of external world the internal play of *vāsanā*-s⁵⁰, still inside the pal of objectual universe, we can infer that *nityā drṣṭi* subsists even when the *anityā* one, depending on the adventitious *kāraṇa*-s' work, subsides.

47. Cfr. *Śaṅkara's* remarks on *ātman's atīndriyatva ad BhG XIII, 12* as well as his innumerable statements on his self-revelation without the help of any *pramāṇa*.

48. Such an objection is presented *ad BĀU IV, 3, 23*: «*paśyāmi na paśyāmitīy anubhava*». That we have here an *anumāna* is said *ad BĀU I, 4, 10*.

49. Discussing *BĀU I, 4, 10* («*andhasyāpi ghaṭādyābhāsavaiṣayā svapne drṣṭir upalabhyate*») as well as *BĀU IV, 3, 23* («*uddhṛtacakṣuṣāṃ ca svapne ātmadrṣṭer aviparīlopadarśanāt*»).

50. See *ad BĀU I, 4, 10*: «*svapnabuddhāntayor vāsanāpratīyayārūpaṃ*».